



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MEMORANDUM

TO: JuanCarlos Hunt, Director  
Office of Civil Rights

FROM: Amanda Sweda, Senior National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator  
Office of Civil Rights

*Amanda Sweda*

Kristin Tropp, National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator  
Office of Civil Rights

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DATE: November 17, 2021

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2021 Reasonable Accommodation Data

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, the Reasonable Accommodation (RA) program processed a total of 316 requests. Of the 316 requests, 288 were initiated in FY 2021 and 28 were initiated in FY 2020. The 28 requests initiated in FY 2020 were in pending status on September 30, 2020 and were carried over and completed in FY 2021.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a summary and analysis of the RA requests that were initiated in FY 2021:

Of the 288 requests initiated in FY 2021, 243 requests were processed and completed.<sup>2</sup> 45 requests remain in pending status and have been carried over to FY 2022 to continue processing.

Breakdown of the 243 requests completed in FY 2021:

- 210 requests were approved;
- 2 requests were denied;
- 4 requests were denied under reasonable accommodation (RA) but were offered some relief outside of the RA process;

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<sup>1</sup> The FY 2020 requests that carried over into FY 2021 were completed within the time frames in EPA Reasonable Accommodation Procedures. Of the 28 requests started in FY 2020 but completed in FY 2021: 17 were approved, 3 were denied, 7 were withdrawn by the employee, and 1 was closed.

<sup>2</sup> Processing and completing a reasonable accommodation request refers to the steps taken starting when the employee or applicant first makes a request to the conclusion of the process usually with the decision-maker issuing a decision or in some cases when the request is withdrawn or closed.

- 17 requests were withdrawn by the employee; and
- 10 requests were closed.<sup>3</sup>

Of the 288 requests initiated in FY 2021, ten (10) were from new employees and five (5) were from applicants. There were no Personal Assistance Services (PAS) requests initiated in FY 2021.

In FY 2021, the Agency processed and completed 243 of the 243 requests (or 100% within the time frames identified in EPA Reasonable Accommodation (RA) Procedures with an average processing time of 13.4 days. The Agency has attained a 90% or greater processing rate for *eleven* consecutive years.

In FY 2021, the most requested items or types of accommodations were:

1. Assistive technology (AT) equipment as well as ergonomic equipment such as ergonomic keyboards and chairs (combined) with 71 requests;
2. Telework (full-time, additional day, episodic, etc.) with 64 requests;<sup>4</sup>
3. Computer equipment such as larger monitor, mouse, etc. with 54 requests;
4. Modified work schedule (start/end times) with 25 requests;
5. Facilities related requests such as small refrigerators, space heaters, workspace modification, and changes to lighting with 10 requests;
6. Sit/stand desks with 8 requests; and
7. Change in duty station with 7 requests.

The National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators (NRACs) delivered 27 training sessions to a total of 1,345 participants. The training sessions included four (4) Agency-wide trainings delivered virtually, as well as trainings for the offices below:

- Region 3 (Philadelphia);
- Region 5 (Chicago);
- Region 9 (San Francisco);
- Region 10 (Seattle);
- Office of the Administrator (AO);
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO);
- Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA); and
- Office of Research and Development (ORD).

In FY 2021, six (6) new Local Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators (LORACs) were trained on the EPA reasonable accommodation process.

If you have any questions about the reasonable accommodations processed during FY 2021, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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<sup>3</sup> Employee resigned, retired, or separated from the Agency or in some cases passed away; therefore, a decision for the request was no longer needed and was closed without a final decision.

<sup>4</sup> Up until FY 2021, telework has usually been the most requested accommodation. The total number of reasonable accommodation requests in FY 2021 is the lowest it has been since 2016. Requests for telework were much lower than the previous years, likely due to employees improvising under the telework and scheduling flexibilities offered by the Agency during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cc: Kevin Bailey, Deputy Director  
Cynthia Darden, Assistant Director, Employment Complaints Resolution Staff  
Michael Nieves, Assistant Director, Affirmative Employment, Analysis, and  
Accountability